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The Case of the Mawlid Collection and of šay Hšim's al-Fat al-Ramn**

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Text Collections in the Arabic Manuscript Tradition of Harar: The Case of the *Mawlid* Collection and of *šayḥ* Hāšim's *al-Faṭḥ al-Raḥmānī*

Abstract: In my paper I describe two text collections (the so-called *Mawlid* Collection and *šayḥ* Hāšim's *al-Faṭḥ al-Raḥmānī*) widely attested in multiple-text manuscripts (MTMs) of the Arabic manuscript culture of the Islamic city and learning centre of Harar (Eastern Ethiopia), highlight the main components of both collections and their distribution in the codices, and carry out a comparative analysis, tentatively reconstructing a possible history of their formation and diffusion.

1 The Islamic manuscript tradition in Harar

Harar, possibly the most important Islamic cultural centre of the entire Horn of Africa, is a walled city located in Eastern Ethiopia 525 kilometres east of the capital Addis Ababa (9°19'N 42°7'E; census 2012: 151,977 inhabitants).

According to the Harari Islamic tradition, as preserved in one of the chronological lists of the city's rulers,¹ an emir called Ḥabbūba is credited to have governed Harar as early as 896. However, the historical reliability of the document has been harshly questioned,² and in any case no further detail of the oldest phases of Harar's history is known; thus, they remain shrouded in vagueness.

Another local historical tradition claims that Harar came to play a major role in the Ethiopian political and religious landscape in 1216, when, according to the historiographical/hagiographic text of the *Faṭḥ madīnat Harar*, which is

The data used in the following text has been collected in the framework of the project 'Islam in the Horn of Africa: a Comparative Literary Approach' (IslHornAfr, ERC advanced grant no. 322849).

1 It is the list prepared by Aḥmad al-Šāmī and preserved in the manuscript 276B of the Institute of Ethiopian Studies in Addis Ababa (dated April 1956; on the manuscript see Wagner 1976, 188–189 and Gori et al. 2014, 9).

2 Wagner 1976, 193–195.

attributed to an otherwise unknown author called Yaḥyā Naṣrallāh, the saint Abādir ‘Umar al-Riḍā’ came with 405 fellow holy men from Mecca to Harar. The group settled in the region and practically established the city’s supremacy over the surrounding regions.³

In external historical sources, Harar is first attested in the Chronicle of ‘Amdä Šəyon, where it is mentioned in the list of the Muslim regions and groups which joined the war coalition led by *qāḍī* Šālīḥ against the Christian state in 1332.⁴ The fact that Harar only managed to contribute five *māk’ännən* to the alliance on that occasion can be interpreted as an indication of Harar’s relative insignificance.⁵

In 1520, Harar became the capital of the emir Abū Bakr b. Muḥammad, who belonged to the Walasma’/Walašma’ dynasty.⁶ After the *ḡihād* of *imām* Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm, emir Nūr b. Muḡāhid made the city the centre of his rule and built the famous defensive wall, which was to become the symbol of the city. From 1647 to 1875, Harar was the capital of an independent emirate under the dynasty of ‘Alī b. Dawūd.⁷

In 1875, the Egyptians occupied Harar and governed it from 1875 to 1885 in the framework of the expansionist policy carried out by khedive Ismā‘il b. Ibrāhīm.

Harar reacquired its independence in 1885 with emir ‘Abdullāhi, but in January 1887 it was conquered by Mənilək, and was thus eventually subsumed into the modern Ethiopian state.⁸ A *new* overwhelmingly Christian Harar slowly grew outside the historical wall. The city, however, preserved its fame as a centre of Islam in the Horn and managed to partially revive its previous independent status, when it became a regional state (The Harari People’s National Regional State) in the federal Republic of Ethiopia in December 1994.⁹

3 The *Faṭḥ madīnat Harar* has been published by Ewald Wagner (1978) who accepts with some minor reservations the general chronological and factual framework of the text, while discharging the many blatant anachronisms which are scattered in the narration of the events (see also E. Wagner, ‘Faṭḥ Madīnat Harar’, in *EAE* vol. 2, 2005, 505b–506b and E. Wagner, ‘Harār history till 1875’ in *EAE* vol. 2, 2005, 1015a–1019a).

4 Marrassini 1993, 104–105; Kropp 1994, 30 (text), 36 (translation).

5 On this point, see Wagner 1976, 194.

6 On the Walasma’ dynasty see the introductory article of van E. van Donzel, ‘Walašma’ in *EAE* vol. 4, 2010, 1083a–1084b.

7 On the dynasty of ‘Alī b. Dā’ūd see E. Wagner, ‘Alī b. Dā’ūd dynasty’ in *EAE* vol. 1, 2003, 199b–200a.

8 On the Egyptian rule in Harar see the J. Miran, ‘Harār under Egyptian occupation 1875–85’, in *EAE* vol. 2, 2005, 1019a–1020a.

9 Some general data on this last phase of the history of Harar has been collected by T. Carmichael, ‘Harār from the late 19th century to the 20th century’, in *EAE* vol. 2, 2005, 1020a–1021b.

Harar is the centre of a well-defined manuscript tradition preserving and transmitting texts in Arabic (both of local foreign authors) and in the Old Harari ‘*aḡamī*’ tradition.

It is practically impossible to even approximately calculate the number of manuscripts which have been produced and copied in Harar or have circulated in the city. A very vague estimation can be made by looking at the collections in Ethiopia and abroad that contain manuscripts originating from the walled city.

The main present locations of manuscripts from Harar are the following:

- Addis Ababa, the Institute of Ethiopian Studies at the University has at least fifty manuscripts certainly coming from Harar (out of 303 items composing the whole Islamic collection);¹⁰
- Harar, the ‘Abdallāh Šarīf private city museum has at least 491 manuscripts¹¹ collected in the city and its surroundings;
- Pavia, Italy, the City Library ‘Carlo Bonetta’ possesses twelve manuscripts acquired in Harar in 1888–1889 by the engineer Luigi Robecchi Bricchetti, who passed them to the library in 1926;¹²
- Rome/Vatican City, eight items in the Vatican Library Arabic collection come from Harar (Vat. Ar. 1791, 1792, 1793, 1796; Cer. Et. 325, 326, 327, 328),¹³ and two manuscripts from Harar are kept in Rome in the ‘Fondo Conti Rossini’ at the library of the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei (CR 75 and 129);¹⁴
- Berlin, twenty-one codices collected by Ewald Wagner between 1966 and 1972, which are now kept at the Staatsbibliothek Preußischer Kulturbesitz;¹⁵
- Leiden, twenty so far uncatalogued manuscripts collected between 1956 and 1972 by the Dutch scholar Abraham Johannes Drewes in Harar and its region are preserved in the private possession in Leiden;
- Paris, the Bibliothèque nationale de France has two Harari manuscripts, which were acquired in the walled city by Philipp Paulitschke, who subsequently donated them to the library, where they were bound together in one (Orientaux divers 70).¹⁶

10 On this part of the Islamic manuscript collection at the library of the IES in Addis Ababa see Gori et al. 2014, xl–xli.

11 Belle Tarsitani 2009, 10 (table 1.) affirms that the Museum of ‘Abdallāh Šarīf keeps 950 manuscripts. I can confirm that the institution certainly possesses many more than the 491 items to the images of which I have access but I am not able to provide any further estimation of the quantity.

12 The collection has been catalogued by Traini 1974.

13 Catalogued respectively by Levi Della Vida 1965, 150–155, 156–159 and Cerulli 2004, 232–238.

14 Catalogued by Strelcyn 1976, 197–198, 322.

15 Catalogued by Wagner 1997.

16 Cohen 1931, 249.

1.1 The Harari ‘*aḡamī* tradition

The main features of the manuscript tradition containing texts in the Old Harari language in Arabic script can be summarized as follows:¹⁷

The earliest attestation of manuscript tradition dates back to the first half of the eighteenth century, the oldest datable manuscript containing a text in Old Harari being 1460 Abdulahi Collection 118 (previous numbering ASH 060 5-13-5)¹⁸ dated 27th *raḡab* 1112 H. (7th January 1701). A palaeographical and philological analysis of the manuscript¹⁹ points to the fact that it probably represents an earlier tradition which can be traced back to the seventeenth century.

A great bulk of the Harari ‘*aḡamī* literature in verse and prose can be qualified as pietistic and devotional (e.g. the so-called ‘Canzone dei Quattro Califfi’, i.e. ‘The Song of the Four Caliphs’, a more than 500 verse-long poem, which praises the Prophet Muḥammad and the Four Rightly Guided Caliphs), and didactical and instructional in theology and law (e.g. the *Kitāb al-farā’id*). Non-religious texts also exist and are mainly represented by the anonymous *Masnoy* (poem describing the good physical and moral qualities of a perfect bride).²⁰

Harari ‘*aḡamī* literature has had both written and oral circulation, and can still be partially considered a living tradition. However, a great part of the younger generation of the Harari people, especially outside the walled city, faces growing difficulties in reading Old Harari in Arabic script (and sometimes also Arabic tout-court). A blossoming literary production in Modern Harari written in Ethiopic script is spreading and could become in the most important way for Hararis to express themselves in writing.²¹

¹⁷ For a general and comprehensive description of the literature produced in Harar see Banti 2010, on which the following few lines are based. In particular, for a definition of the linguistic labels ‘Old Harari’, ‘Middle Harari’ and ‘Modern Harari’ see *ibid.* 155–156.

¹⁸ The more recent numbering is the one introduced by the Ethiopic Manuscript Imaging Project (led by S. Delamarter; George Fox University) during the work conducted at the ‘Abdallāh Šarif private city museum in May of 2011.

¹⁹ In particular, the consistency shown by the orthography used in the manuscript is a strong argument (Banti 2010, 154).

²⁰ Cohen 1931, 328–354 gives a first description of the structure and content of the text based on the two manuscripts given by Paulitschke to the BnF (now bound in only one codex).

²¹ The existence of an edition of the *Kitāb al-farā’id* in Ethiopic script most probably published after 2004 in Dire Dawa at the Ḥalaf printing press points exactly at this increasing difficulty in accessing, reading and understanding the original text in Arabic script experienced by more and more Hararis (*ibid.* p. IV: *Yom aḥḥazal ḡil arābi-le-m ḥana ingliz sinan-le bāḡiḥ-be nugda-nta-ma kil saba kutāb nawāṯḥo fara’id iqot-le čaḥ tālle*, ‘As the present genera-

1.2 Arabic manuscript tradition in Harar

A conspicuous Arabic manuscript tradition exists in Harar. So far, the oldest dated Arabic work written by a Harari learned man has been considered to be the *Tanbīh al-nā'imīn*, a work by *faqīh* Ḥāmid b. Šiddīq, an eighteenth century scholar of the Ḥanafi school of law, was completed in *ḍū al-ḥiğga* 1169 (Aug.–Sept. 1756): it is copied in manuscript Vat. Ar. 1791 together with two other texts of the same author (undated but reasonably from nineteenth century).²²

The first dated Arabic manuscript which undoubtedly comes from Harar is the *muṣḥaf* which is now in Addis Ababa, Library of the Institute of Ethiopian Studies, IES 258 (original shelf mark Harar 20) dated (colophon fol. 256r) 25 *rağab* 1141 H./Feb. 24, 1729. As in the case of the '*agamī*' tradition, these eighteenth-century manuscripts seem to represent a writing practice which was already rather established and can most likely go back to the seventeenth century (or even earlier).

2 MTMs in the Arabic tradition in Harar

Multiple-text manuscripts (MTMs) are practically the norm in the whole Harari manuscript tradition for Arabic and '*agamī*' (and the few multilingual codices).

The most common (and sometimes partial) exceptions are:

1) the Qur'ān which is copied in one volume²³ or sometimes in two halves or even in *ağzā'* (30 parts, mostly meant for recitation within one month). They are exactly 30 equal parts of the text of the Qur'ān which are copied in 30 separate thin and tiny volumes. Thus, each textual section is a new codicological unit.

2) extensive handbooks of law like the much renowned and widespread *Minḥāğ al-ṭālibīn* by the highly revered representative of the *šāfi'ī* school of law Yaḥyā al-Nawawī (d. 1277), which has been copied in four distinct volumes: from the beginning to *kitāb al-ḥağğ*; from *kitāb al-bay'* to *kitāb al-ğū'āla*; from

tion is mostly unfamiliar with Arabic and English, I have transposed it into the Ethiopic script so that the *farā'iğ* become spread and known').

²² On Ḥāmid b. Šiddīq see the general article E. Wagner, 'Ḥāmid b. Šiddīq al-Hararī', in *EAE* vol. 2, 2005, 990a–990b.

²³ There are some *muṣḥaf*-s where the sacred text is not only copied together with some usual invocations and propitiatory prayers (after the Qur'ān—the widespread *du'ā' ḥatm al-Qur'ān*—but also before it as the *istiṭāḥ al-Qur'ān* in EMIP01591 Abdulahi Collection 249 or the *du'ā' qabl qira'at al-Qur'ān* in EMIP01591 Abdulahi Collection 250), but also with short treatises on the readings and the rules of recitation of the Qur'ān (e.g. the one of Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad al-Ḍağā'ī transmitting it from Muḥammad b. 'Umar Šaw'ān in EMIP01560 Abdulahi Collection 218).

kitāb al-farā'id to *kitāb al-naḥqāt*; from *kitāb al-ḡirāḥ* to the end (*kitāb um-mahāt al-walad*). In these cases, the division almost always corresponds to a logical and consistent organization of the topics and is in direct correspondence with the programme the students of law go through during their career.²⁴

Among the most diffused MTMs in Harar, there are manuscripts which are used as handbooks for teaching and learning, thus containing texts directly related to the standard curriculum of traditional Islamic education. The main fields in which these manuscripts specialize are:

1) Arabic grammar; 2) the basics of the creed (*'aqida*) and of theology; 3) the fundamentals of law and jurisprudence (*fiqh*); 4) mysticism (*taṣawwuf*); 5) magic; 6) logic (*manṭiq*) as a side subject to grammar and *'aqida*.

3 MTMs of devotional/liturgical collections in the Arabic literary tradition of Harar

The phenomenology of Harar's Islamic culture is characterized by a wide and deep presence of mysticism, which has become an integral part of the daily religious practice of most of the faithful. In the great majority of cases, the sufi influence on the spiritual life of the Harari people did not trigger or necessitate full-time membership in, or a stable connection to, an organized brotherhood (*ṭarīqa*). However, a mystical dimension is evident in the deeply felt devotion with which many average believers of the walled city revere their holy men²⁵, and in the collective pleasure with which they perform congregational ceremonies on all the main festivities of the Muslim calendar and on other religiously relevant days: *Mawlid* (the birthday of the Prophet Muḥammad on the 12th of the Islamic month of *rabī' al-awwal*); evenings of the fasting month of *ramaḍān*; during the pilgrimage to the tomb of a famous saint on the yearly anniversary of his death (*ziyāra*); on the night between Thursday and Friday; on *'Āšūrā'* day (10th of *muḥarram*, the first month of the Islamic calendar).²⁶

²⁴ For the customary four-tiered division of Islamic law see e.g. Hallaq 2009, 28–29. So far, no detailed study is available on the connection between the organization of the law tradition, its study and the handbooks used in the educational institutions.

²⁵ It is not by chance that Harar is also nicknamed *madīnat al-awliyā'*, 'the city of the saints': for the origin of this name see Cerulli 1936, 2.

²⁶ On Islamic pilgrimages in Ethiopia see A. Gori, 'Islamic pilgrimages', in *EAE* vol. 4, 2010, 153b–156a. *Āšūrā'* has a particular relevance in the Islamic practice in Harar: a fully-fledged

Participants to private parties and banquets celebrating purely secular celebrations also chant with sincere commitment supplications and invocations to God, eulogies and hymns for the Prophet and the holy men to show their piety and respect for the Islamic tenets and principles.

In the Arabic literary tradition of Harar, it is thus possible to identify collections of recurrent texts which are read and recited during some of the collective public or private festivities and form a kind of liturgical corpus, in which the above-mentioned mystical atmosphere is expressed clearly and enthusiastically.

The two most important liturgical/devotional collections of texts in the Arabic literary tradition in Harar are the *Mawlid* collection and the collection built up around the *Faṭḥ al-Raḥmānī* by ṣayḥ Ḥāšim.

3.1 The Harari *Mawlid* collection

The Harari *Mawlid* collection is one of the most renowned Arabic literary products from the walled city and at the same time a well-established textual basis and framework for the most important collective ceremonies performed in Harar on public and private festivities, events and occasions (in the first place obviously for the anniversary of *Mawlid*/birthday of the Prophet himself). Even a superficial visitor cannot fail to notice that this collection of texts is present in the common religious life of Harar's inhabitants.

The scholarly research on the *Mawlid* collection in Harar is still in its infancy:²⁷ in a previous contribution²⁸ I have described some of its main features, and here I will resume the analysis from a comparative perspective.

3.1.1 The Harari *Mawlid* collection: the manuscript (and the printed) circulation

Twenty-four manuscripts of the *Mawlid* collection have been identified so far. Here is the list:

- Addis Ababa, Library of the Institute of Ethiopian Studies, eight manuscripts: IES 264, nineteenth century; IES 273, second half of the eighteenth

study on the many different rituals performed on this day has still to be conducted (see for a general introduction Ahmed Zekaria 1992).

²⁷ An introductory article on the *Mawlid* (and *Mawlid*-related ceremonies) in Harar is S. Tarsitani, 'Mawlid in Harär', in *EAE* vol. 3, 2007, 879a–880b.

²⁸ Gori 2010 and see also Banti 2010, 152–153.

century; IES 1855, eighteenth century; IES 2662, late nineteenth–early twentieth century; IES 2663, eighteenth century; IES 2664, late nineteenth–early twentieth century; IES 2665, late nineteenth–early twentieth century; IES 2666, late nineteenth–early twentieth century;²⁹

- Harar, ‘Abdallāh Šarīf private museum, fourteen manuscripts: EMIP01438 Abdulahi Collection 96, eighteenth century; EMIP01439 Abdulahi Collection 97, nineteenth century; EMIP01440 Abdulahi Collection 98, twentieth century; EMIP01441 Abdulahi Collection 99, twentieth century; EMIP01442 Abdulahi Collection 100, twentieth century; EMIP01443 Abdulahi Collection 101, nineteenth century; EMIP01527 Abdulahi Collection 185, colophon (fol. 59r) 18 *ša’bān* 1339 H./27 April 1921; EMIP01528 Abdulahi Collection 186, eighteenth century; EMIP01529 Abdulahi Collection 187, colophon (fol. 66v) 5 *ḡumādā al-ṭānī* 1292 H./9 July 1875; EMIP01569 Abdulahi Collection 227, nineteenth century; EMIP01576 Abdulahi Collection 234, twentieth century; EMIP01684 Abdulahi Collection 342, twentieth century; EMIP01691 Abdulahi Collection 349, twentieth century; EMIP01692 Abdulahi Collection 350, twentieth century;
- Harar, one manuscript of the private collection of the late Zakariyā’ Ḥāmid (nineteenth century), where it was found and photographed by Dr Simone Tarsitani (Durham University) in Harar in 2007;
- Belbelletti (Harar region), one manuscript of the collection of *šayḥ* ‘Abd al-Karīm b. Šiddīq (twentieth century) where it was localized by Hassen M. Kawo and photographed by myself in 2008 in Addis Ababa.

From a chronological point of view, the testimonies can be ordered as follows: 12 manuscripts of the twentieth century, six manuscripts of the nineteenth century, and five manuscripts of the eighteenth century.

The Harari *Mawlid* collection has also been printed at least six times in different places and ways.

Two printed editions were carried out in Egypt in 1350 H./1931³⁰ and in 1366 H./1947.³¹ Later in 1412 H./1991–2, the facsimile reproduction of a manuscript of an unknown copyist was carried out and distributed in Ethiopia. After the end of the year 2000, or at the beginning of 2001, the facsimile of a manuscript, the copy of

²⁹ For a brief description of these manuscripts see Gori et al. 2014 under the relevant entries.

³⁰ Printed in Cairo at al-Maṭba’a al-ḡusayniyya in 127 pages.

³¹ Printed in Cairo at Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī wa-awlāduḥ in 100 pages. The background of these two Egyptian editions is unknown. There are, however, several examples of Ethiopian Islamic texts printed in Egypt: see Gori 2015, 67–68.

which was completed on 26 *ramaḍān* 1421 H./23 December 2000 by the scribe Ibrāhīm Muḥammad Wazīr,³² was reproduced and circulated in Ethiopia.³³

One of the above-mentioned Egyptian books reprinted once in Dire Dawa, n.d. and eventually a computer typed edition (175 pp.) realized by Abū Bakr Ṭābit and printed by Dire Printing started circulating in September 2005 in Addis Ababa.

3.1.2 Textual structure of the Harari *Mawlid* collection: a short analysis

The conspicuous amount of manuscripts and the different printed editions clearly point to the extreme popularity of the Harari *Mawlid* collection among the Harari people. The origin and developments of the text collection through its manuscript and printed tradition still have to be analysed in detail. The general textual framework in which the collection can be situated is relatively clear.

In the manuscripts of the Harar *Mawlid* collection, a clear tendency towards the creation of a standardized selection of texts can be identified, which has eventually been “canonized” and disseminated in the manuscripts which have been printed out or retyped on computer. The connection of this later standardized collection with the earlier manuscript tradition is *prima face* very tight, even if the phases of the completed selection procedure still need to be investigated.

Two pivotal constellations of texts are easily detectable:

- one built around the *taḥmīs al-Fayyūmī* on the *qaṣīdat al-Burda* (al-Kawākib al-durriyya fī madḥ ḥayr al-bariyya by al-Buṣīrī);
- another one around the *Kitāb ‘Unwān al-ṣarīf* by Abū al-Ḥasan Nūr al-Dīn ‘Alī b. Nāṣir
- series of *salāmāt ‘alā al-nabī* and of pietistic poetry functions as trait d’union between the two.

³² Ibrāhīm Muḥammad Wazīr copied also a *taḥmīs al-Warrāq ‘alā al-Witriyya* (completed on the 22 *rabī‘ al-awwal* 1412 A.H./10 October 1991) reproduced and distributed by *al-ḥāḡḡ* ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Abū Bakr Ṣarīf and the famous Bun Fāti(a)ḥ a mixed Arabic-Old Harari invocation for the “coffee ceremony” (manuscript completed on 19 *ṣa‘bān* 1409 A.H./27 March 1989; I thank Ahmed Zekaria of the Institute of Ethiopian Studies and Éloi Ficquet of the French CNRS for providing me images of this text).

³³ The role played by the reproduction of manuscripts when the printing press initially spread among Ethiopian Muslims would deserve specific research (see some first general observations in Gori 2015).

The influence of the reading and chanting practice on the formation of the later version of the collection has also to be studied with more attention. However, it is already clear that the performance of the texts surely triggered the insertion of more and more short invocations and supplications both in Arabic and in Harari in the texture of the collection.

The *Mawlid* collection in Harar offers an exceptionally interesting example of the interconnections among manuscript tradition, introduction and diffusion of printing press and oral performance of devotional texts: further research on it will certainly cast more light on the intricacies of these interconnections.

3.2 The *Faṭḥ al-Raḥmānī* by ṣayḥ Hāšim

Even though the *Faṭḥ al-Raḥmānī* is evidently less relevant than any of the *Mawlid* collections, it is nevertheless rather more relevant within Harari Arabic literature. The attribution of the work to a very famous local learned man, and very revered saint and mystical guide, who is still widely venerated in the walled city has probably contributed to its fame and diffusion among the faithful. An organized devotee group (*ḡamāʿa*) of ṣayḥ Hāšim in Harar still preserves the memory of the master and his works (and especially the *Faṭḥ*), chanting them during communal gatherings every Thursday evening.³⁴

3.2.1 Ṣayḥ Hāšim al-Hararī: some biographical data³⁵

Abū ʿAbdallāh ṣayḥ Hāšim b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. *amīr* Hāšim al-Muḥammadi al-Šāfiʿī al-Ašʿarī al-Qādirī al-Hararī³⁶ (c.1711–1765).

Grandson of *amīr* Hāšim b. ʿAlī b. Dawūd, he became a famous Qādirī ṣayḥ (but in MS EMIP01563 Abdulahi Collection 221 f. 53v ṣayḥ Hāšim is also given the *nisba* al-Šāḍilī), a teacher and a very prominent figure in both the Arabic and the Old Harari literature.

³⁴ Devotional prayers and litanies cherished by ṣayḥ Hāšim's followers were copied in a manuscript reproduced in print at an unknown date under the title *Awṛād maqām al-ʿarīf bi-llāh Abī ʿAbdallāh Hāšim b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Qādirī*. The undated and anonymous manuscript appears to be a *waqf* of ṣayḥ Hāšim's shrine in Harar.

³⁵ The available data on the life and works of ṣayḥ Hāšim are summarized by E. Wagner, 'Hāšim b. ʿAbdalʿazīz', in *EAE*, vol. 2, 2005, 1044a–b.

³⁶ Ṣayḥ Hāšim has no connection with the homonymous holy man *walī* Hāšim.

In Harari he authored the poem in praise of the Prophet which exists in a longer and a shorter version, and is known by the title of *Muṣṭafā*. The text was printed in Addis Ababa in 1974. In 1983, Ewald Wagner scientifically edited and analysed the text

He composed the *Faṭḥ al-raḥmānī* and a series of invocations and prayers of mystical and devotional content and inspiration in Arabic.³⁷

Šayḥ Hāšim died around 1765 and was buried in Harar in the Aw ‘Izzin graveyard in the area of Assum Bari outside the city’s wall. A *galma/zikri bet* (house of devotional congregation) where his devotees gather to sing his praises and recite his texts is located inside the wall of Harar in the area of Argob Bari.

3.2.2 *Al-Faṭḥ al-raḥmānī*: the manuscript (and printed) circulation

So far, *al-Faṭḥ al-Raḥmānī* is attested in 13 manuscripts:

- Addis Ababa, Institute of Ethiopian Studies three manuscripts: IES 282 (twentieth c.); IES 2670 (twentieth c.); IES 2671 (nineteenth century);
- Harar, ‘Abdallāh Šarīf private museum eight manuscripts: EMIP01444 Abdulahi Collection 102: colophon of the *Faṭḥ* 169v; *ṣafar* 1168/Nov.–Dec. 1754; EMIP01446 Abdulahi Collection 104: colophon 40v 18 *ḡumada al-awwal* 1329/17 May 1911 (copyist al-ḥāḡḡ ‘Abd b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ḥāḡḡ ‘Āmid b. qāṭ Ibrāhīm b. qāṭ ‘Alī); EMIP01447 Abdulahi Collection 105, possibly nineteenth century; EMIP01448 Abdulahi Collection 106: incomplete colophon fol. 60; possibly late eighteenth century; copyist, fol. 59v, Ibrāhīm b. ‘Umar b. Sa’d b. ‘Abdallāh; EMIP01449 Abdulahi Collection 107: colophon *ḡumada al-tānī* 1392/Jul.-Aug.1972; copyist ḥāḡḡ Tawfiq ‘Umar Baraso); EMIP01450 Abdulahi Collection 108 twentieth century; EMIP 01451 Abdulahi Collection 109 twentieth century; EMIP01563 Abdulahi Collection 221, possibly nineteenth century;
- Pavia, Biblioteca Civica ‘C. Bonetta’ MS Robecchi Bricchetti 5, eighteenth century;³⁸
- Riyadh, library of the King Saud University 7480 (number of the category – *raqm al-šinf* – 218 *fā’ hā’*) and approximatively dated to the thirteenth century of the *hiḡra* (eighteenth to nineteenth century).³⁹

³⁷ For the titles of all the so-far known shorter works of šayḥ Hāšim see Gori 2016, appendix 1.

³⁸ Traini 1973, 7–10.

Chronologically, oldest dated testimony of the *Faṭḥ al-raḥmānī* is EMIP01444 Abdulahi Collection 102 having a colophon on fol. 174v dated *ṣafar* 1168/Nov.–Dec. 1754 (a date which falls well within the lifetime of the author); three more manuscripts are possibly of the eighteenth century, three manuscripts of the nineteenth century and six manuscripts of the twentieth century.

The *Faṭḥ al-raḥmānī* has been printed at least three times: in Cairo at Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī in 1368 H./1949; then in Ethiopia, in Addis Ababa at the Maṭba‘at Addis in 1386 H./1967 (edition by the famous Harari learned man and politico-cultural activist *al-ḥāḡḡ* Yūsuf ‘Abd al-Raḥmān),⁴⁰ later reprinted by Ibrāhīm ‘Umar Sulaymān at Maṭba‘at Šimbir in *muḥarram* 1401/1980–1981.

The Ethiopian printed edition is actually a facsimile reproduction of a manuscript copied by Ibrāhīm ‘Umar Sulaymān (colophon p. 154: 7 *ṣawwāl* 1386/19 January 1967), who allegedly collated it with the autograph of *ṣayḥ* Hāšim, which is kept in custody of the *murīd ṣayḥ* ‘Abd al-Ġawād kabīr Ismā‘īl b. al-Muqrī at the *maqām* of the *ṣayḥ* and dated (ibid. p. 90) Thursday 19 *ša‘bān* 1171 (28 April 1758).

As a final proof of the esteem in which the work is held in the walled city, it has to be mentioned that the renowned and discussed *ṣayḥ* ‘Abdallāh al-Hararī (d. 2008) has produced an abridged version (*muḥtaṣar*) of it, which was published in Beirut in 2004.⁴¹

3.2.3 The texts around the *Faṭḥ al-raḥmānī*

The analysis of the manuscripts and the printed versions that I have managed to conduct⁴² shows that there is no clear indication that a standardized text collection around the main core of the *Faṭḥ* had been formed before the printed edition appeared: some testimonies only include a small amount of supplicatory

³⁹ The manuscript has not been catalogued yet, but its digitized images are accessible online under <http://makhtota.ksu.edu.sa/makhtota/8142/1#.V4Umkv197rc> (last accessed 20/04/2017). The pdf of the entire codex is also downloadable under <http://www.al-mostafa.info/data/arabic/depot/gap.php?file=m012776.pdf> (last accessed 20/04/2017). A bibliographic record of the manuscript is also available on the web site of the King Saud University.

⁴⁰ This edition is mentioned by O’Fahey 2003, 31. On Yūsuf ‘Abd al-Raḥmān see Erlich 2007, 102.

⁴¹ The book was printed at the *Dār al-mašāri‘*, the publishing house of the so-called *Aḥbāš* movement in Lebanon (see H. Erlich, “‘Abdallāh b. Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Hararī”, in *E Ae* 5, 2014, 210b–211a on the learned man of Harari origin founder of the *Aḥbāš* group).

⁴² A first analysis of the texts collected in the manuscript tradition and in the printed versions of the *Faṭḥ* was carried out in Gori 2015.

texts attributed to more or less famous mystical authors, while other codices contain an extremely wide selection of invocations and prayers (anonymous and authored). Even the smaller texts by *ṣayḥ* Hāšim which are copied together with his main work are selected and copied in the manuscripts of the *Faṭḥ* without following any apparent plan.

Only the manuscript copied by Ibrāhīm ‘Umar Sulaymān in 1967⁴³ and sponsored by Yūsuf ‘Abd al-Raḥmān shows signs that texts were consciously selected to be combined with the *Faṭḥ*.

4 Some final observations

As a first conclusive observation that can be inferred from the comparison made here, it can be said that, in the local Arabic manuscript tradition of Harar, the MTMs mostly came into light as a kind of repository of texts which were selected and collected for devotional and liturgical purposes.

Prayers, invocations, hymns and eulogies of local authors (as *ṣayḥ* Hāšim’s *al-Faṭḥ al-raḥmānī*), anonymous or composed by non-Ethiopian authors (as in the *Mawlid* text collection), slowly came to form a more or less structured repertoire. This repertoire was used in collective public and private ceremonies and festivities as a sort of *soundtrack* for the common devotional practice of the faithful in the walled city. In the case of the *Mawlid* collection, the selection started earlier than that of the *Faṭḥ*, which started later and remained uncertain.

43 To help the reader to get a more precise idea of the *Faṭḥ* and the texts around it, I provide the following brief summary of the content and structure of the manuscript printed in 1967. Preface, pp. 6–7, containing the description of God’s inspiration to the author, the visions of the Prophet, who foretells that *ṣayḥ* Hāšim will be in paradise drinking from the *tasnīm* fountain and exerting an intercessory power (*ṣafā’a*) for his devotees; p. 8, *niyat al-ṣalāt ‘alā al-nabī* fully taken from al-Ġazūlī’s *Dalā’il al-ḥayrāt*; pp. 9–90, the *Faṭḥ al-raḥmānī* in five chapters; pp. 91–94, *du‘ā’* to be read after *ṣalāwāt* (partially exemplified on the *Dalā’il al-ḥayrāt*); pp. 95–104, *da‘wa* (i.e. *du‘ā’*) *al-Dimyāṭiyya* with anonymous *taḥmis* (base text by Nūr al-Dīn al-Dimyāṭī d. 921 A.H./1515 A.D.); pp. 105–106, *du‘ā’* of Ibn Zarrūq al-Burnusī (d. 1493); pp. 106–111, anonymous *taḥmis* on *al-Qaṣīda al-muḍariyya* by al-Buṣīrī (d. 1294); pp. 112–116, *taḥmis* *‘alā al-Wasīla al-‘aẓīma* attributed to Badr al-Dīn al-Ḥusayn b. al-Ṣiddīq b. al-Ḥusayn b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ahdal (d. 903 A.H./1497–8); pp. 116–118, *‘Ayniyyat al-Suhaylī* (with *taḥmis*) by ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘Abdallāh al-Suhaylī (d. 1114); pp. 118–120, *qaṣīda* with *taḥmis* *Ilzam bāba rabbika* by Muḥammad b. ‘Alawī al-Ḥaddād (d. 1720); pp. 120–121, *du‘ā’ niṣf ṣa‘bān*; pp. 121–122, *du‘ā’ šahr ramadān*; pp. 122–123, *tawassul bi-al-asmā’ al-ḥusnā*; pp. 124–128, *Rātib al-sa‘āda* by Muḥammad al-Sammān (d. 1775); pp. 128–131, invocations attributed to al-Šāfi‘ī and to the Prophet.

Possibly, the extreme popularity enjoyed by the *Mawlid* collection was the cause which favoured and strengthened the tendency towards standardization. With regard to the *Mawlid* collection, it is clear that the recitals and the collective performance of the hymns and invocations influenced the selection of the texts and the copying of the manuscripts. However, this conclusion is still subject to a deeper analysis and cannot be completely dismissed also for the *Faṭḥ*.

The creation of a standard collection of texts was dramatically hastened by the introduction and diffusion of the printing press among the Hararis after the Second World War. For both the *Mawlid* collection and the *Faṭḥ*, the passage from manuscript to print triggered the production of some facsimile manuscript prints, which had been copied precisely for the purpose of being printed.

It can be easily hypothesized that the goal behind these editorial operations was to provide the Harari public with reliable and ultimate editions of the most cherished works circulating in the walled city and to support the devotees with a standardized version of their ritual set of invocations and prayers to be chanted during their congregational gatherings. The use of printed manuscripts may appear peculiar, but it can be explained by the intention of giving the prints the prestige, the soundness and the *philological* exactitude which only manuscripts can reach in the perception of the learned elites of the Muslims of Ethiopia.

It is evident that editors and patrons such as Yūsuf ‘Abd al-Raḥmān played a crucial role in promoting and guaranteeing the success of such complex editorial activities. However, beyond the individual initiative of the editors and their sponsors, the production of the *Mawlid*’s and the *Faṭḥ*’s standardized collections should also be assessed within the framework of the theological (and cultural) discourse taking place in Harar from the second part of the twentieth century onwards, when so-called *traditional* Islam and so-called *Wahhabi-Salafist* were opposing blocks.

The fixation of a sound and reliable textual base for the traditional practice of the faithful of the city has certainly been an important tool to counter the criticism of those who discharged it as a disrupted and degenerated heritage of an insufficiently Islamic community.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ A pioneering study on the ways the literary production has been edited and diffused as an intellectual tool in the conflict between Wahhabism and traditional Islam after the inception of the age of print can be found in Khan 2016.

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